TOWN
&
OUNTRY
HURCH

In This Issue

uis C. Toppan is director of the Pel- Rural Fellowship, about which he s on Page 1. His post office address F. D. 1, Amherst, Mass.

ırk A. Dawber, see Board of Editors, the need of Christian education in oping wholesome community life. Page

C. Crookshank writes, on Page 3, t the parish of Ditchling, Hassocks, and, of which he is rector.

statement on harvest festivals by the nittee on Town and Country gives ric roots and current methods. Page 7.

obert L. Clingan, whose sermon ap- on Page 8, is minister of the Fed- d Church (Presbyterian and Baptist), a, N. Y.

ne story of Rev. L. L. Langstroth— Great Pastor-Naturalist"—is told by am L. Bailey on Page 10.

. A. MacLeod, who writes about "Farm eration in Western Canada," is Direc- of Publicity for the Canadian Cooper- Wheat Producers, Ltd.

e you coming to the San Jose Con- ion? For information regarding it, see 16.

No. 46
October, 1948

The Pelham Rural Fellowship

LOUIS C. TOPPAN

• The Pelham Rural Fellowship is an informal organization of about a dozen ministers serving small or medium-sized churches in and around Amherst, Massachusetts. The best description of the Fellowship which I have heard was given by a friend from outside our group. He spoke of us as a "working fellowship," as distinct from a traditional ministerial association or a council of churches. Within the ordinary ministerial association there is often good fellowship, but not much of a program for the churches. On the other hand, a local council of churches may be strong on program but is usually weak in fellowship. Our group finds the dynamic of its program within the spirit of fellowship which unites us.

The fellowship was organized ten years ago through the interest and insight of the Rev. Harold B. White, then pastor of the Pelham Federated Church. The name of the group evolved because "fellowship" was the keynote and strength of the gatherings of the "rural" ministers as they met at the Pelham parsonage.

When Mr. White entered government service in 1943 the writer was elected director in his place, and the South Amherst parsonage became the center of operations for the Fellowship.

Purposes and Principles

From the beginning the purpose of the Fellowship has been two-fold: (1) To help each minister be a more effective and happier workman in his own parish, and (2) To help the churches help themselves in facing their problems.

The principle upon which we operate is a simple one: several units working together can do better work than the same number of units working separately. By pooling our resources of inspiration, skill and wisdom, we learn from and strengthen each other. The appeal of our combined needs and strength enables us to secure personnel and services which would not ordinarily be available to isolated churches.

What We Do

There are ten items in our program, some of which directly benefit the minister and indirectly the churches, and others which directly help the church people. The program is as follows:

1. At least four ministers' meetings are held each year for fellowship and professional help. The distinguishing mark of these meetings is democratic discussion, sharing our successes and failures, and our dreams for the future. In this way ministers of small churches, who usually are lost in the larger church emphasis of denominational promotional meetings, come into their own. Every man's contribution is welcomed.
2. Once or twice a year a social event for the ministers and their families is arranged. Generally this has been a picnic outing at Camp Anderson.
3. From the beginning it has been the Fellowship's practice to buy a few good books each year and to circulate them among the ministers. Occasional reports are made on these books.
4. Twice a year the pastors exchange preaching engagements. This practice enables us to become better acquainted with the other parishes and, thus, better able to share one another's problems and make more constructive suggestions for their solution.
5. At the outset of the organization it was arranged for each minister to specialize in one form of activity. His specialized talents were then available to the respective churches and ministers on whatever basis seemed best. The chief problem in this connection was the rapid turnover of ministers

which precluded any very continuous program of "staff ministry." At the present moment we have men well qualified to share their wisdom and talents in such fields as recreational leadership, the direction of vacation church schools, psychological problems and their solution, public speaking, audio-visual aids in Christian education, and church administration and finance.

6. During the summer we have one or more staff workers available to some of the churches in the Fellowship. This staff help has come from two sources:
   a. At times vacation school workers, paid by the Congregational State Conference, have been assigned to the Fellowship.
   b. Through the interest of the Amherst College Christian Association we have often had one or more pre-ministerial students to serve on our staff during the summer. The usual arrangement is for the church which is enjoying their services to provide room and board. The salary is paid by the Fellowship with money granted to it from the Amherst College Community Chest Fund. These students are under the guidance of the man in whose parish they work. Some of their activities have been vacation school leadership, Sunday School teaching, preaching or otherwise sharing in the morning worship, pastoral calling, community recreation leadership, and service on the staff of the boys' session of Camp Anderson.
7. We have four rallies for the Fellowship youth during the year. One great advantage of these gatherings is that the young folk come from churches of about the same size, so their needs are much the same.
8. The Fellowship sponsors Camp Anderson, a summer camp for boys and girls of Hampshire and Franklin Counties. The Camp property is owned and administered by an incorporated charitable group that continues the tradition of the founder, the Rev. William Anderson. The purpose of the camp is to give fine camping experience, under Christian auspices, to rural and small town children, many of whom would not be able to afford the cost of attending some other camp.
9. The twelfth annual Easter sunrise service was held on Pelham Hill this year. The attendance has varied from 184 to nearly 500. The appeal of this tradition is very strong and draws attendants from a large area. Following the service, coffee and doughnuts are served at the nearby town hall by members of the Pelham Federated Church.
10. The most dramatic of our undertakings is the annual Christian Choir Festival, now in its fourth year. Under the direction of a very able and consecrated laywoman, one hundred and fifty members of the Fellowship choirs join in a carol festival early in December.

Last year the Fellowship cooperated with the Commission on Worship of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America to combine the choir festival with a seminar on worship, said to be the first ever held in the nation for rural churches.

Problems

We have four problems which are always with us: finance; lack of lay participation; the comparatively rapid turnover of ministers; and the need of keeping a proper balance in our program.

What Does the Pelham Fellowship Suggest?

1. Consecration, hard work, intelligence, and a knowledge of what others are doing are nec essary to meet successfully th problems that are common t church and community.
2. Other Fellowships can be de veloped profitably, bearing i mind the following results o our experience:
   a) Use a convenient geographi area, preferably an area o common economic interest
   b) Much enrichment of life wil come from an interdenom inational fellowship. (B an accident of history an area our group is almos entirely Congregational.)
   c) Start in a small way. Allo a normal evolution in pro gram to meet local needs and use local talent. You job is to build up loca churches.
   d) The spirit of the grou should exalt the idea tha "the local church shoul be the glue that holds th community together, no the wedge that drives i apart."

Changes in Church World Service Program

• Changing trends in overseas relie needs have made it necessary fo Church World Service to revise som parts of its program so that th church people of America can mos helpfully continue their relief an reconstruction work abroad.

Added emphasis will be placed o the "self-help" program sponsore in other lands by CWS. This will in clude the shipment of more supplie of raw materials such as bulk wheat cotton, wool. Such gifts to the peopl in Europe and Asia will "take car of need, furnish employment an supply them with a chance to de velop their own reconstruction," o ficials said.

Another "Friendship Train," t be sponsored by the Christian Rura Overseas Program of Church Worl Service this fall, will have as its goa the collection of 3,500,000 pound of wheat in the southwestern state to be shipped abroad.

Christian Education and Community

MARK A. DAWBER

'he major emphasis and interpre-
on of Christian theology and
losophy has been in terms of the
emption of individuals. We have
theology of the redemption of
mmunity—we urgently need a the-
gy of community redemption. I
convinced that such a theology,
practised by the churches, would
o to solve the Protestant dilemma
l to cure the Protestant paralysis.

w Christian Unit

am convinced that we need a
Christian unit. This unit must
at once a weapon and an end in
lf. Churches as now operating
d to be ends in themselves. Po-
cal parties tend to become ends
themselves rather than means to
end. This new unit for which I
ad must be at once an open Chris-
n community and a revolutionary
phetic agent in moulding the life
he people.

'he forces of Christian education
e a great responsibility for this
mmunity evangelism. Making the
mmunity Christian is not going to
pen as a result of a few preach-
nts from the pulpit, or the pro-
ncements of a ministerial associa-
n. It is an educational task that
st penetrate all the agencies and
vities of the community—school,
ge, grange, children, youth and
lt programs, and especially the
anization and promotion of com-
nity activities along lines of
istian conduct.

for the Unafraid

n a recent article in *Zions Her-*
by Dr. Allan Knight Chalmers,
itled "A Job for the Unafraid,"
is concerned with this problem
organized evil and lists a number
he issues involved. Then he fol-
s with a significant statement
ch I quote:

This list is not supposed to be ex-
austive, nor am I talking about
he problems as such; they are
nerely illustrations for the mo-
nent and I use them to show the
enormity of the difficulty and
against this big job to throw the
Christian solution.

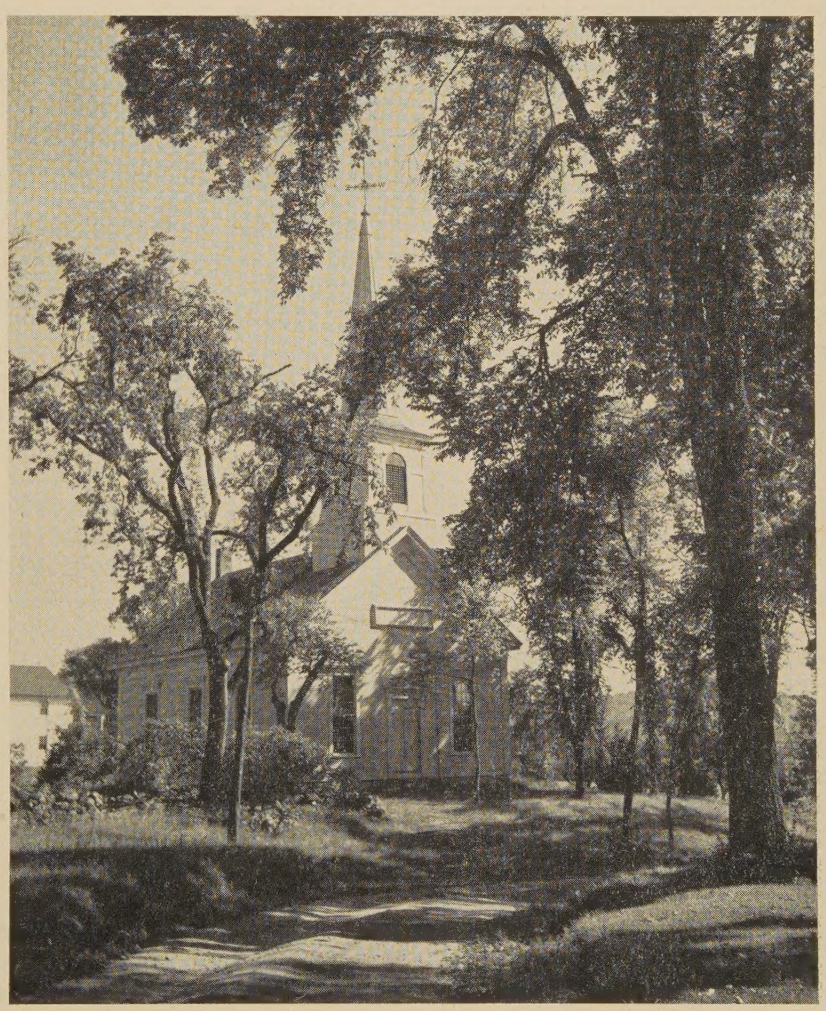
"It lies in the principle of the
Christian community. I do not see,
myself, how a man can tackle this
job of the Christian life by him-
self. He has no chance to win if
he works alone. But when a man is
a part of a fellowship which is
aiming at this realistic idea of a
Christian community, he can dis-
regard this accidental quality in
his own individual success or fail-
ure.

"You and I, either individually
or collectively, cannot do all of
these essential jobs. We do not
have to. But we do not do what
we can unless we have sense
enough to see that our individual
lives belong to and are part of
the Christian community. Where
you stand, as far as your life
touches the world at all, be true
to that idea. You belong to the
Christian community. Through
that living fellowship, generation
after generation, the idea is held
and given substance."

Christian education must be con-
cerned with the community if it is
to save the great mass of individuals.

Time for Re-Examination

This would seem to suggest that
the time is full ripe for the church
to re-examine itself and its program
in terms of the community. Most of
our churches and church schools are



Church and dirt road,
Rumford Point, Maine

Winston Pote
A. Devaney, Inc., N. Y.

institutions apart from the community. In fact, it can be said without any question that in many communities the church is the most divisive institution. Most of our Protestant churches are not community institutions. The minister is assigned to a congregation, to an institution, and not to a parish with a defined community area and program. As a result, we have overlapping and wasteful competition, and, what is worse, half the people are lost in the shuffle caused by competition. This is due to the fact that the church has not conceived of its task in community terms. One of the urgent demands now facing church leadership is this adjustment of the church and its program to the community.

It is also necessary that the people of America be educated in political and social issues on the community level. Not until this is done will there be any intelligent understanding of these issues. The restoration of culture, of home life, also waits upon the development of community.

Christianity is a religion of relationships. The crux of the present world and national problems is this absence of friendship relations of people. Unless people can be brought to this friendship relationship on a community basis, there will be little chance to achieve these friendship relations beyond the community.

Youth and Careers

This community basis of life should provide a challenge to youth now searching for careers of significance and adventure. Youth should be helped to see the community as the place where basic human culture is preserved and transmitted, and should be encouraged to seek careers there. This alone would be a real achievement in Christian education.

Community must be conceived of not in terms of geography but of spirituality; it is something more than a place, it is a state of mind and a spiritual fellowship. I do not like to tell Negro stories, and will not tell them when they reflect against the Negro. But here is one that does him credit. The story is told of a man who was travelling south, and his train stopped somewhere between Arkansas and Texas.

While the train stopped the man got out to take a little exercise. He wondered what the name of the place was, inasmuch as there were no signs to indicate the same. After a while an old colored man came walking down the platform and the man asked him, "What community is this?" The colored man replied, "What's dat you say, boss?" "What community is this?" replied the man. The colored man thought a moment and then asked, "Boss, what am a community?" "Why," said the man, "A community is a place where people work together, play together, live together." The colored man thought a moment and then replied, "Well, boss, I guess this aint a community, it is just a place."

I think the Negro said something that has far-reaching significance for all of us. So many of these situations are just places, they are not communities. They are lacking that sense of unity, of common purpose, and achievement. The community must achieve a common view of a total way of life and a common discipline. Only to the extent that it does so is it actually a community. Such a way of life must grow by the democratic process that is essentially spiritual. Developing such a community sense of living is certainly a great Christian objective.

I would conclude with a quotation from that outstanding community leader, Arthur E. Morgan, who, in a recent article on "The Community, the Seedbed of Society," stated as follows:

> "For the preservation and transmission of the fundamentals of civilization, vigorous, wholesome community life is imperative. Unless many people live and work in the intimate relationships of community life, there never can emerge a truly unified nation, or a community of mankind. If I do not love my neighbor whom I know, how can I love the human race, which is but an abstraction? If I have not learned to work with a few people, how can I be eff tive with many?"

The forces of Christian educati would do well to address themsel to this important demand of o time. This conference can render significant service in reviving int est in the community and in the thinking and restatement of Chr tian education in terms of the co munity.

The Problem of the Rural Chur and its Solution

• The development of the succe ful pastoral unity of Davis Coun Iowa, is described by Buell McCa in a July issue of *The Christia Evangelist,* St. Louis, Mo., und the title, "The Rural Church Pro lem—A Solution." The author is layman and an attorney of distin tion.

Davis County is situated son fifty miles west of the Mississip River, with Bloomfield, Iowa, county seat. Here, two pastors ser five churches, and maintain offic with secretarial help in the baseme of the county welfare buildin These ministers are available f consultation at regular hours ea weekday, and on Saturday the offi is open until 9:00 P.M.

Contacts have been establish with all local farm organizatio and the work of the churches closely integrated with school a civic organizations.

In recognition of its outstandi achievements the Davis County P toral Unity was recently awarded certificate of merit by the Io Christian Fellowship at its annu meeting at Ames.

Worshippers

• The types of hearers who go worship are:

The worshippers by proxy, app ing what is said to someone else; t superficial worshippers, busy inspe ing what is worn by others, lookin to see who is there; and the re worshippers—those who attentive hear, consider and obey.

—*The Christian Index*

own & Country Church

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Church and Countryside in a Sussex Parish

A. C. CROOKSHANK

• The parish of Ditchling lies only seven miles north of Brighton, but is cut off from all sight and sound of it by the smooth green rampart of the chalk downs.

Ditchling belonged to King Alfred the Great, and was left by him to his cousin in his will dated 891. Perhaps even as far back as his day there was a Saxon church here. Certainly there was one when the Normans came in 1066, and its foundations are incorporated in the present church.

For at least 900 years, then, a church has stood on the knoll above the houses of the village; and she looks out today on fields that have changed little in all that time.

Ties Between Church and Land

The ties between the church and the land have never been wholly lost; they have been grievously weakened; and here, as elsewhere, we are seeing the vital need to re-knit them. "Where," we have asked ourselves, "are we to begin?" Harvest Thanksgiving Sunday has, as in all English parishes, long been re-established here; but what of the other seasonal services, Rogation and Lammas, which were being revived elsewhere, could we too revive them? And Plough Sunday, frankly a new invention of the church, and none the worse for that.

Some years back a Rogationtide Blessing of the Fields had been held here, but only as an isolated event; could we start it again as a regular annual service? Would people respond? The new vicar in 1944 decided to try, and the response was excellent; and so we went on to keep Lammas too, and Plough Sunday.

Stitches in a Fabric

For three years now we have sewn the four great stitches, Plough Sunday, Rogation, Lammas and Harvest Thanksgiving, into the fabric of village life, to hold together the Church and the work in the fields.

The first is sewn at the very beginning of the year. Past days knew nothing of Plough Sunday. There was Plough Monday when the plough boys went round hat in hand to gather what they could for themselves. That had long since ceased, but now the Church has taken and blessed and remade that ancient custom, as it has done with so many others.

Plough Sunday

On the second Sunday in January, then, we bring a plough into church. It is very much a working plough, not one dolled up for the occasion. It will be turning the furrows, perhaps, on Monday. It stands in the Chancel between the Choir Stalls, stilts towards the West; and after the second lesson at evensong two young farmers come out and stand behind the stilts. The Vicar stands at the head of the plough facing them. "Reverend Sir, we desire that you ask God's blessing on the year's labour, now begun by the landworkers of this parish, of which this plough is the sign and token."

So asks one of the farmers. The spring ploughing will soon begin. The autumn ploughing has long since been done. The farmer's work is never ended; it is a continuous process, but the New Year, when the earth begins again to stir into life after the winter's sleep, is more of a beginning than any other time. Besides that, the plough is a "sign and token" of all the work to be done, of all the tools to be used. Perhaps next year we shall have a harrow, spades, forks, hoes, to make this clear.

It is a blessing on all the work of the parish that the priest promises to ask: "My Brothers, this will I do, with hearty prayer to Almighty God for His favour and goodness towards us." After some simple prayers, he lays his hand upon the plough and says: "God Speed the Plough! And may the blessing of God Almighty, The Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be upon you all and all who plough the

fields, that the people of our land may be satisfied with bread."

At Rogationtide

The fields are ploughed, the seed sown, and the spring rain and sunshine clothe the bare earth in green again. Then, at Rogationtide, we go out to bless the fields and the growing crops, the springs and waters, the beasts and cattle, and the homesteads.

Our tithe map of 1843 gives the old names of all the fields, and among them are two called "Epistles" and "Gospels." We visited them last year and clasped hands across the centuries with our ancestors who had done, long before us, that which we were now reviving. It was in "Epistles" that the heifers came down to see what we were doing, and to enter the circle of praying folk. They stood very quiet, not like the colts in another field which came up suspiciously to eye us, and then with a snort galloped off wildly round the meadow.

Our prayers for the farmlands done, we were led by the Cross and choir back to the centre of the village where we prayed for the right ordering of our village life, for peace and goodwill, for deliverance from petty feuds and jealousies, grumbling and bad temper. And so back to church, with a pause in the churchyard to remember the generations that have gone before us.

Lammas

The work on the land goes on; the hay is cut and carried, and in August, sometimes at the end of July, the first corn is ready for the reaper. The second Sunday in August has not been too early to keep Lammas. On the second Sunday morning in every month we have a sung communion service at 9:30, and every month at that service the bread and wine for the Communion are carried in procession, with the alms, to the altar.

Now, in August, we bring also a sheaf. It is a composite one, made from small bundles of the first-cut corn from each of the six or seven farms in the parish. All offer their first-fruits. With the sheaf we bring a loaf made with corn that was growing in the fields only the week before, and part of the loaf is used for the Communion.

We have learnt more from this service than from any other. One lesser matter is the discovery that the hymn we have so often sung at Harvest Thanksgiving with the lines,

Upon thine altar, Lord, we lay,
The first-fruits of Thy blessing,

does not belong to harvest at all, but to Lammas. It is at Lammas that we offer the first-fruits, with the most earnest prayers, so heart-felt in these days, that God will prosper the whole ingathering of the harvest.

Deeper Truths

We have learnt much deeper truths than that. Here enacted before us is God's plan for the world. It is He alone who can bless and prosper man's work. We have asked Him to do that on Plough Sunday. Then man sets to work with God, in partnership with Him, under "His foreman Nature," as Donne wrote. At Rogationtide we pause in the work, we remember how small man's part is, how great God's; in the living soil, by snow, rain, sunshine, by the mystery of germination and growth and we ask Him to bring that work to fulfilment. At Lammas the corn is ripened at last, and we offer the first-fruits to Him, but not the sheaf only, the loaf also; that is, the grain with the work of many more men added to it, the carter, the thrasher, the miller, the baker, all have done their part before the bread is made. And the same is true of the wine. Many men have worked to harvest and prepare the grapes before they become the wine in the chalice.

In offering the bread and wine, we are offering all men's work, all the work of the parish to God, and then His plan is unfolded further before us. The result of man's labours in partnership with God is offered to God, He blesses it, and He gives it back to us to be shared equally among all; for so is the bread and wine shared among the kneeling rows at the altar.

Then there bursts over us yet another truth, that every communion every Sunday is in miniature a Lar mas, yes, and a harvest thanksgivi too. Whenever we offer the bre and wine at the altar, we offer men's work and life, we give than to God for all His gifts, and we he his command to share all He h given us fairly among all.

Harvest Thanksgiving

When all is safely gathered in ar we hold once again our Harve Thanksgiving, we have a long wa to go. These services only touch proportion of our numbers; as y we have brought in but few of th farm folk themselves. There is muc more to be done to re-integrate th life of the parish, to bring togeth again the church and the land, to g men to centre their life and wor once more in God. To help in th we have a branch of the Church ar Countryside Association in the pa ish. One of its first activities was hold an Exhibition of "Ditchling B gones." A surprising number things were brought together. Th parish registers starting in 157 were shown; and our Elizabetha chalice and paten (too thin to us now); and, far older, the oak churc chest made before 1300. There we old maps, and many pictures brougl out from unexpected hiding plac in many houses; old farm impl ments, an armchair made for Joh Attree of Ditchling, and never o of the parish, with his initials ar the date 1652 carved on it; o photographs of choirs and crick teams (we set 1900 as the limit) which even the oldest inhabita found difficulty in identifying ever one. Few who came to see the exhib tion went away without a new real zation of how deeply we are roote in the past, and in the soil.

An Association

The Association has also pu lished "The Story of Ditchling" portrait as it were of the parish, n a history) which has sold out a fi edition of 3000 copies; and broadsheets dealing with sections parish history.

Now it is helping in a great ne experiment in the village, the tempt to get all parish organizatio

d individuals to work together in Village Council, a body ready to kle any job, educational recrea- nal or utilitarian for the good of e whole community.

The special task of the Church d Countryside Association as a ember of the Village Council must to see that nothing is planned ich cannot be offered to God.

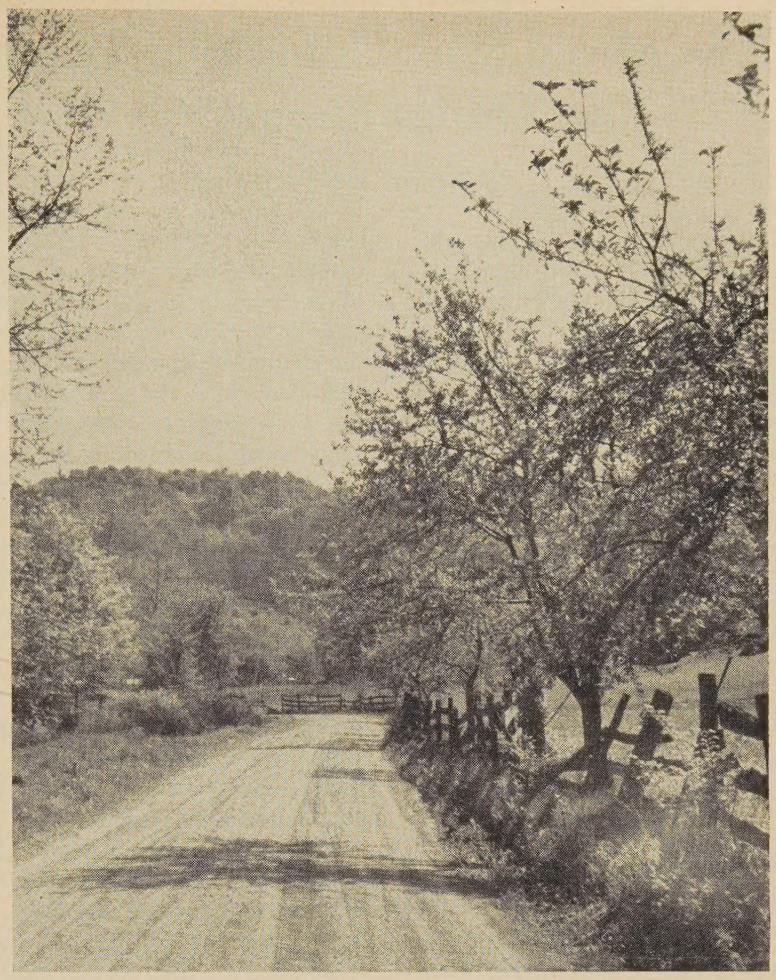
The Harvest Festival— A Statement

the Committee on Town and Country

The celebration of "harvest home" very old and has a place in the story of many peoples. The matur- g harvest inspired men to expres- ns of praise and thanksgiving ich found their way into the re- ious services of all lands and iths. The great Hebrew festivals d agricultural associations. The ast of Unleavened Bread in the nonth of earing" celebrated the pearance of the ripening ears and e start of the barley harvest; the orshipper brought a shear of the w grain in consecration of the st-fruits. The Feast of Harvest or eeks (Pentecost) was the closing stivity of the seven weeks' joy of rvest. The Feast of Ingathering abernacles), in the time of the rvest moon, was an autumn holi- y, the crowning harvest festival, lebrating the ingathering of fruit, l and wine.

Primitive folk festivals at harvest me combined with the Hebrew tra- tion under the auspices of the ristian Church to give England joyous "Harvest Home," Ger- any its "Erntedankfest" and Scot- nd its "Kirn." Pageantry, sports, nging, feasting and the comrade- ip of master, mistress and workers aracterized these occasions and be- me the social and spiritual expres- ns of joy at the harvest's end. The lgrims kept their day of thanks- ving on the shores of New Eng- nd with feasting and religious ex- cises.

Some churches, like the Reformed, utheran, Mennonite, Moravian and ethren, have continued to cele- ate "harvest home," but in some her communions this practice has



Luoma *from Monkmeyer Press*

been all but abandoned, or the emphasis has shifted to Thanksgiving Day in late autumn and the remembrance of national blessings, with but minor reference to the bounties of the harvest. This unfortunate trend has produced a nation of town and country churches in whose worship the references to seed-time and harvest are peculiarly lacking. No worship can, without losing vitality, remove itself from the ordinary pursuits of men. It is especially in connection with agriculture, where mystery and providence are so evident, that this needs to be kept in mind. This seventh annual leaflet, accordingly, calls the attention of all communions, rural and urban alike, to the opportunities for religious experience and expression in services of thanksgiving and dedication at the harvest season.

The Harvest Festival may be held from August to November, but September and October are the most suitable months. It is best to keep it as a special day, apart from home comings, anniversaries, rally days and annual meetings. Since decorations and offerings play such an important part in this festival, it must be held when suitable produce is available. The flowers, fruits, vegetables and other produce used as decorations and brought as thank-offerings may be given to homes, hospitals and other charitable institutions, or they may be distributed among the sick and needy in the community. Cash offerings for missionary and benevolent purposes should also be received at this time.

An order of service may be obtained for use by a congregation from your cooperating home mission board, or from the Committee on Town and Country, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. Single copies, 5c; $1.00 a hundred.

"The Ministry of Things that Perish to Things Eternal"*

ROBERT L. CLINGAN

• Ecclesiastes 3:11-13 (American Standard) "He hath made everything beautiful in its time: also he hath set eternity in their heart, yet so that man cannot find out the work that God hath done from the beginning even to the end. I know that there is nothing better from them, than to rejoice, and to do good as long as they live. And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy good in all his labor, is the gift of God."

Artificial grapes adorned the store window in which we were looking. My little girl asked, "Daddy, what are those?" First I said, "Grapes." Then I had the problem of explaining to a four-year-old mind the difference between artificial and real in the realm of grapes.

Had the grapes been real, they would have retained their color and shape only a few hours. So it is with the fruits of the harvest, they must either be eaten or they spoil. Only the artificial creations of glass and fabric have a lasting quality.

Nevertheless, I prefer grapes that are real. In a similar fashion, the most changeable and perishable aspects of our material world are the most significant for human experience. What is more fleeting than a sunset, a rainbow, or the fragrance of a rose? Surely the fruits of the harvest, the things that perish, have something to say to us this morning.

Fruits of the Harvest

The fruit of the harvest demonstrates a kind of beauty for every season in the growth of the plant. There is the beauty of the leaf. Vacation Bible School classes have made prints of the veins of leaves and made far lovelier pictures than any member of a class could have drawn. We are familiar with the blossoms and their beauty—not only the flowers of the flower gardens, but those of the fruit trees and vegetable plants as well. In this service we are especially conscious of the beauty of the fruits of the harvest in their rich variety of shape and color. As the scripture says, "He hath made everything beautiful in its time."

This is also true of human life. There is the beauty of a baby and a child. When the baby first enters this cold cruel world, it is too much to expect it to be beautiful. However, it is not long until people say, "What a beautiful baby." We are also aware of the beauty of youth in all its dreams, ambitions, and never ebbing enthusiasm. Poets have long since caught the loveliness of two young people sincerely in love.

Maturity has also its beauty. When people in maturity achieve poise, self-assurance, in the building of a home and in making a place for themselves in the world and their own community, there is something beautiful about it all.

Age on the part of those who are growing old gracefully has its crowning beauty. Remember the words Browning placed in the mouth of one of his characters, "Grow old along with me, The best is yet to be."

In response to this lesson from the things that perish we might accept these words of a prayer poem:

> "God who touchest earth with beauty
> Make me lovely too,
> With thy spirit recreate me
> Make my heart anew."

Chain of Relationships

The fruits of the harvest, the things that perish, also teach us that nothing has meaning or can even have existence of and for itself. An apple may be used to illustrate our point. That apple may have lovely coloring, its contour may be excellent, and the flesh of the fruit tasty and of the best in texture. At the same time, that apple comes as a link in an entire network of relationships.

Behind the apple there had to be the tree. The tree had to have the right kind of soil, soil produced of ground rock that had to be worked by soil producing plants and animals. The soil had to have the correct range of moisture. Apple trees do not grow in swamps or in desert places. The range of temperature is also significant. If it is too warm the tree will die, and if too cold it will be "winter-killed." Back of the fruit was the blossom. Each blossom had to be fertilized by the pollen of another blossom. The good Lord furnished the breeze and the bees to make the fruit bearing possibilities of the blossom come to pass. In the natural world before human cultivation, the attractiveness of the fruit drew the animals and birds that devoured the fruit, scattering the seed thus spreading nature's apple orchards.

The apple then has little meaning of and by itself. It is a part of the "web of life." Human existence is the same kind of a process. We are each a part of a chain of relationships. The sooner we recognize this simple fact of life, the quicker will we be prepared for the discipline and understanding of Christian discipleship. Human life has a meaning, far beyond our individual selves. The Scripture says, "No man liveth unto himself." John Donne in his quaint way said, "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent." We each have a part to play in God's purpose as we live out our days in our own particular place in the "web of life." This is one of the lessons of the fruits of the harvest, the things that perish.

Several weeks ago, an Indian grave was opened in our county. Among various articles, as well as human bones, was found some stored grain. This grain must have been several hundred years old. A number of years ago some grain was found in the tomb of an Egyptian king. The grain was reputed to have been thousands of years old.

* A sermon preached at a combined World Communion and Harvest Festival Service.

'here is something sad about this in. By being locked in the tomb a Cayuga Indian or an Egyptian g, it was not allowed either to sus- ı life or fall into a furrow and ltiply its existence. It was not en a chance to die and multiply kind.

ritual Message

esus noted this fact of the mate- world, that the price of life is tinuous death, when he said, "Ex- t a corn of wheat fall into the und and die, it abideth alone: but it die, it bringeth forth much it." He quickly followed this ob- vation with a spiritual interpre- on, "He that loveth his life shall e it; and he that hateth his life in s world shall keep it unto life rnal."

'he life that remains selfish is as grain in the tomb of a Cayuga lian or an Egyptian king. A man st die to his self-interest, he must ome a changed person, he must born again. The price of life is tinuous death. Only by dying to does one become a contagious ristian personality.

n this service we memorialize one o often used the incidents of the wing season to illustrate his spirit- message. He talked about the er, the weeds in the wheat field, vineyards, and harvest itself. He d the fruits of harvest, the things t perish, to teach about things rnal. He not only talked about -sacrifice as illustrated by the in falling to the earth, but he nonstrated it in his living. He d it even to the point of death on the cross, of which the bread l wine are symbols.

Let us participate in a service h Christians all over the world:

Christ there is no East or West,
Him no South or North;
one great fellowship of love
roughout the whole wide earth."

'he attitude which "believeth things, hopeth all things" is a nonstration of that expectancy ch is the most creative aspect of rist-born faith.

School for Missionaries and Rural Pastors

January 3-28, 1949

• The Cornell University annual school for rural missionaries will be expanded in 1949 to include rural pastors. A total of thirty rural pastors and missionaries will be accepted.

Tentative arrangements have been made to have a course in rural sociology and one in agriculture. New courses will be taught by the Rev. Ralph L. Williamson and will consist of a course for the ministers on "Rural Church Administration" and a course on "Bible and Rural Life Improvement."

Applications should be sent to the Rural Church Institute, Barnes Hall, Ithaca, N. Y.

Rural Life Prize Sermons

• For the third year the Virginia Council of Churches is offering prizes for Rural Life sermons. Awards are: first prize $25.00; second prize $15.00; third prize $10.00.

Rules for the 1948 contest are:

1. Sermons should teach Christianity in terms of rural life experiences.
2. Contest is limited to ministers serving in Virginia.
3. The sermon must have been prepared and delivered by the individual submitting it.
4. Sermons will be judged on the basis of content, composition and contribution to rural life.
5. Only one sermon may be submitted by each contestant in any one year.
6. Sermons should be typed and four copies submitted wherever possible.
7. All sermons should be submitted before November 15th to Rev. J. P. H. Mason, Doswell, Virginia, or B. L. Hummel, Chairman, Rural Church Department, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Virginia.

It is planned that eventually the winning sermons will be published as a volume to be entitled, "Virginia Rural Life Sermons."

Building a Better World

• The Committee on Religious Education of the Friends General Conference has recently published a pamphlet entitled, "Christian Living in Rural Communities," by Gordon P. Jones. This attractive brochure consists of twenty lessons which are designed to present the problems and opportunities of rural life to groups dwelling in both urban and rural communities so that a greater degree of understanding may exist between the two. It also aims to bring about a realization of the wonders that are capable of bringing enrichment to the lives of rural people.

Among the topics discussed are those on Family Life, Health, Church, Education, Recreation, Community Activities, Choosing a Life Work, Farming as a Business, and Cooperatives.

The price of the pamphlet is 25c a copy, or ten copies for $1.50. It may be procured from Friends Central Bureau, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia 2, Pa.

A New Reading List

• Agricultural Missions, Inc., 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., has published *A Bibliography on Worship for the Rural Church.* It was prepared by Edward K. Ziegler and his notes on the books should prove a helpful guide in determining which books you wish to buy.

Some seventy-five titles are grouped under the headings of "Background Literature"; "Books Specifically about Worship"; and "Sources of Worship Materials."

Single copies are 5c; 100 or more copies, $2.50.

A Great Pastor-Naturalist

WILLIAM L. BAILEY

• The "Father of American Apiculture," who transformed bee-keeping and honey-making, putting them upon a stable and profitable foundation in this new land, was a retired country pastor—Rev. L. L. Langstroth.

The spirit and personality that fits a man for the pastorate is only slightly a matter of training. And it may find expression in other ways if that channel is denied it. Langstroth had long since retired from the pastorate, but he died in the pulpit. He had served only ten years when at thirty ill-health compelled him to find a new occupation. He had chosen theology and the church early, and taught while preparing in Yale. As a youth he had always shown a consuming interest in the marvels of insect life. After brief pastorates at Andover and Greenfield, Mass., he located near Philadelphia, his homeplace, and with the help of his wife decided on a career as an apiarist.

The Foremost Leader

In less than ten years he had become the foremost leader of this industry. His book, which is still printed in large editions and is the classic treatise of the subject, was published in 1852, and a year earlier he had perfected the movable-frame hive, which has revolutionized the industry of honey-making throughout the world. Soon after he moved to Oxford, Ohio, and specialized in the introduction of the famous Italian bee.

This simple, gentle, godly man, became to American Apiculture what the German country pastor Dzierzon was to the industry there. He is frequently called the Huber of America, because the outward circumstances of his career in this field are strikingly like those of the great Swiss naturalist. Huber, it will be remembered, went blind, but with the help of a very remarkable manservant, and of his family, especially his son, made epochal discoveries of the life of the bee. The contributions of Langstroth were of a different nature than those of either Huber or Dzierzon. The latter discovered one of the marvels of modern science, parthenogenesis in bees, but he also made improvements in the methods of procuring honey. Langstroth's work was a logical extension of the German pastor's. His movable frame revolutionized the hive, and made the bee an immensely more useful and profitable servant of man.

Self-Made Scholar

But bees and honey-making always meant more than that to Langstroth. He had not of course the literary power of a Maeterlinck, whose "Life of the Bee" expresses much that such a one as Langstroth must have felt. For he was a self-made scholar. His library was one of the best in the world in this field. He learned French with the use of his college Latin, that he might read at first hand the large literature of his field in that language. His book, although very practical as a working manual for the industry, is full of literary references.

It is suggestive that his inspiration to undertake this field of work came one day from a contemplation of a honeycomb—with all its marvels—on the table of a friend. He nowhere makes reference to the fact, but he must have known that his Master is recorded to have loved "honey in the comb." Doubtless this recorded choice of foods was a personal characteristic of the Master, and is significant of his outlook on the bounty and wonders of creation, and no mere trivial detail.

Langstroth makes frequent Biblical references throughout his book, and the latest editions state in a note that the author insisted on this. His reason for this may be evident from one of his references: "The Orientals called the honey-bee, *Deborah, She that Speaketh.* Would tha this little insect might speak, i words more elegant than those o Man's device, to those who reject re ligion. . ."

Religious Motive

There was a religious atmospher and even a religious motive in muc of Langstroth's work. "The senti ments of the following extract fron the great Swammerdam," he says "ought to be engraven upon th hearts of all those engaged in in vestigating the works of God. M sole design is to have the true fac and disposition of Nature exposed t sight." And when honored an lauded for his movable-frame hive he felt compelled to say, "I would however, utterly repudiate all claim to having devised even a perfect be hive. Perfection belongs only to th works of Him. . . . For man to stam the label of perfection upon an work of his own, is to show bot his folly and presumption."

Bee-keeping was to him not onl an entree into that marvellous worl whence the bee gathers but also int the very Arcana of nature, and t the informing Spirit of it all.

He refers to "those who live i crowded cities and enjoy an endles meal of brick. The nimble wings o these agile honey-gatherers wi quickly waft them above and be yond the smoking chimney-pots, an they will bear back to the city home the balmy spirit of many a rusti flower blushing somewhere unsee in simple loveliness." He is fond o quoting the *Georgics* of Vergil, wri ten as it was to awaken a new lov for the land in a city people, an speaking as it did of the beautifu countryside from whence came hi loved and admired Italian bees.

Honey at Its Best

Langstroth found a land of mil and honey in the new country o Ohio. For apiarists contend tha newly-settled countries are most fa vorable to the bee and the industr This is only perhaps to say that wil honey, such as John the Baptist at in the wilderness, is honey at its bes

is the basis for the tradition, too, at bees in swarming always go 'estward. For this is the direction the newer lands of Earth.

It is evident that Langstroth had e larger bearing and significance his work in mind. Its moral implitions he was quick to see, and iotes at length from the rural phisopher Columnella:

"If thou wilt have the favour of y bees, that they sting thee not, ou must avoid such things as ofnd them; thou must not be unaste or uncleanly, for these they terly abhor; thou must not come on them, smelling of sweat, or ving a stinking breath; thus must ot be given to surfeiting or drunkness; thou must not come puffing blowing into them, neither hasty stir among them, nor resolutely efend thyself when they seem to reaten thee; but softly moving thy nd before thy face, gently put em by; and lastly, thou must be stranger unto them. So will they ve thee and know thee from all hers.

"If you want to do anything to a e . . . *catch him as if you loved m . . .*"

It is unhappily no longer the cusm for a country pastor to have rm land, yet he is constantly counlled to be a leader in things agriltural. His leadership is liable to e that of a presumptuous amateur, nd dilettantish as a result.

astors and Gardens

But farming at its best is gardeng. And in this phase of agriculture ell-nigh every pastor can find an portunity, if he have the interest nd desire. There is no better occaon for revealing the essential lesns of the earth's bounty to the uninking and unappreciative even nong those whose livelihood is om the land, than in the midst of garden. Any country pastor fails iserably in his spiritual task who ils somehow to cultivate in his rishioners a right spirit in relation the works of Nature. He surely as failed to follow the leadership his Master.

It is wholly remarkable how many of the great names in this special branch of apiculture have been clergymen. The circumstances and the spirit of a pastor's life are extremely favorable for such a pursuit.

The country pastor in the American rural neighborhood, the village or the country town has much to learn from the example and achievements of many a French curé, German pastor, or English parson.

—Reprinted from *Rural America*

"Blest be the Tie that Binds"

• In the July 15th issue of *The Christian Advocate,* Chicago, Ill., the story of John Fawcett was told by E. Jerry Walker under the heading of "The Country Preacher." A devoted country preacher serving the villagers in the little Yorkshire town of Wainsgate, England, in the eighteenth century, John Fawcett lives in the hearts of millions of people today as the author of the stirring hymn:

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

"Country Churches—Living and Dying"

• This is the title of an article which was published in the July issue of *The Presbyterian Survey,* Richmond, Va. The author, Cecil Thompson, compares some of the "dying" churches of Georgia with the Indiantown Presbyterian Church, near Hemingway, South Carolina, which is the center of the life and thinking of the people of the community.

The Indiantown church has a program which serves every need of the individual, family, community and church. It is a program of action, and the minister calls it "The Ten Commandments for a Rural Church." Perhaps it could not all be used in every country church but parts of it could and, eventually, maybe all of it. Here is the program of action of the Indiantown church:

1. A community survey.
2. Every Sunday services.
3. Trained leadership.
4. Following the Assembly's program.
5. Workers' Council.
6. Weekday religious education.
7. Vacation Bible school and summer conferences.
8. Week of special evangelistic services.
9. Challenge to manpower.
10. Adequate equipment.

Down Church Aisles

• The doors of the church must be closer to the sidewalks. The preaching of the church must be deeper. The worship of the church must mean more actual commitment. The ministry of the church must give more upholding comfort. The fellowship of the church must be more inclusive. The sin of the world must walk more freely down church aisles.

—Charles Tudor Leber in *Is God in There?* (Revell)

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Countryman's Journal

• In a recent issue of the *Rural New Yorker,* H. S. Peason writes of rural life in New England in 1910. The school board members then visited the school and quizzed the kids in history, arithmetic and spelling. It was even expected that the children should learn certain facts in school. The writer's father, a pastor, always gave out the words at the community spelling bees.

The high point in spelling bees came when the usual tussle between the sisters, Mildred and Mary Adams, ended differently than previously. Both the girls failed to spell the word "iridescence." Father looked up, and to his surprise found his son next. H. S. P. spelled it properly. The parson father exclaimed, "My gracious, he's done it." The whole family still repeats the words on occasion.

Rural Rehabilitation

• In the spring issue of *Rural Missions,* 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y., John Reisner presented an article entitled, "Rural Rehabilitation and the Rural Church." He said, in part: "If rural rehabilitation is to be effective, it must deal with the rural people where they live . . . The rural church is our seedbed for Christian leadership."

Descriptions of Rural Real Estate

(From a well-known catalog)

"Abandoned Farm for Restoration"

• "There are possibilities here for someone with imagination and lots of courage. This little old Cape Cod cottage has been in the same family for over a century and is no longer used. Some of the small pane windows downstairs have been snitched by antique hunters. Would require complete restoration, but the views, location and price justify it. The 10 acres of land are in good condition as they have been worked by a neighbor. Lively trout brook in rear of cottage. Small barn. Any chickens occupying cottage at time of sale are not included at this price."

"Colonial Cottage for Restoration"

• "For the first century of its life this cottage stood in a rather sheltered spot in another section, but did not have a view. The perfect lines and proportions made it an outstanding example of the architecture of its period. It was taken down board by board by expert carpenters, transported to its present location on a knoll with spectacular views for thirty miles up the valley. Fine cellar was built and then cottage was carefully rebuilt and repegged where it now stands as sturdy as an oak. Eight acres of land. There are no rooms partitioned off since cottage made its jaunt, so no partitions to be ripped out as is usual. You start from there, and the finished cottage should be a museum piece."

"Farm for Sale"

• "The land here is good for such a cheap farm, about 50 acres tillable, 30 acres in pasture and a 20 acre woodlot. Altitude around 1600 feet. The house has good lines but is in pretty terrible condition, and I am not bragging about the road either. Finest spring water piped to the house, and a small brooklet nearby. If purchased before the next heavy windstorm, a barn is included."

Soil Conservation

• A plea for soil conservation was presented in the July issue of *The Mennonite Community,* Scottdale, Pa., under the title "How Stands our Stewardship?" The author of the article, Silas J. Smucker, said: "Low yields, erosion, and wasted soil and water resources definitely point toward weak communities and weak and inadequate institutions of which the church is especially important."

Lutheran Rural Life Institute

• Val Peterson, Governor of Nebraska, was one of the featured speakers at the Rural Life Institute sponsored by the National Lutheran Council this year. This was the second annual conference on rural life to be held on the Concordia campus.

Other Institute leaders were the Rev. E. W. Mueller from the Chicago office of the National Lutheran Council; Steve Cassell of the Division of Agricultural Relations of the TVA; Dr. Daniel Hoover, Gettysburg Seminary, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania; Theodore Grimsrud, Bismarck, North Dakota; Leonard Orvedahl, Bismarck, North Dakota; Dr. George Aus, St. Paul, and Prof. E. J. Haslerud, North Dakota Agricultural College.

Pastors and laymen from Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana were in attendance.

The officers of the planning committee were the Rev. George Unruh, Arthur, North Dakota, President; the Rev. L. O. Gjerde, Fargo, North Dakota, Vice President; the Rev. A. M. Eidbo, Fessenden, North Dakota, Secretary; J. L. Rendahl, Moorhead, Minn., Treasurer.

This was only one of a series of rural life institutes sponsored by the National Lutheran Council, Chicago.

New Hampshire Program

The New Hampshire Congrega-
nal-Christian Conference is mak-
g a vital effort to bring trained
d effective church leadership
the state. Its program includes
e strengthening of ministry
communities where population
d resources are limited, assisting
maintaining effective leadership
direct financial assistance to needy
urches for the support of an ade-
ate ministry, and in aiding such
perimental projects as "life minis-
rs" to town and country churches
d regional ministers in areas where
ere is acute need of rebuilding a
ong and vital community spirit.

Frederick W. Alden, the Confer-
ce Minister, tells of many churches
at have been revived by the guid-
ce and financial aid of the Confer-
ce.

In one town where the church was
minated by a small family group
d their friends, the community was
ut out from participation and from
lding office. There had been no
provements during seventeen
ars and the parsonage family was
ing in two rooms. By discovering
d using local leadership the
urch today belongs to the commu-
ty. The parsonage and church
ve been modernized and redeco-
ed, the membership shows a
arked growth, and the local minis-
r's salary has been increased to
eet his needs. Similar changes have
en reported in a number of other
mmunities.

In other situations the Conference
s given direct financial subsidy to
voted and able pastors to enable
em to carry on alone a fight to
deem their churches and commu-
ies.

fe Ministers

Experience in New Hampshire has
ought to the fore two men of ex-
otional talent, education and
ristian leadership who have been
racted to the call of the rural
urch. These men have promised to
rk under the direction of the Con-
ence in fields of special need, un-
rtaking the work of rehabilitation of a church and its community with all its discouragements and, when it is ready for another man, to go on to a similar field and do the same thing all over again, and to keep on doing this for all the period of their active ministry in the service of the Conference. These men are at work, and two others are ready to devote themselves to life-long work in the rural communities of the Conference as soon as sufficient money can be raised to meet their expenses.

The Conference promises to see that each commissioned life minister has, in addition to the church, a basic salary of $1,800, the payment of all annuity and blue-cross premiums, an allowance of $250 for travel, and the building up of a fund for the education of his children at the rate of $100 a year for each child.

Regional Ministers

During the past two years, two strategic and difficult fields have been opened. One of them has been in a kind of trading center community of the north country on the Canadian border. The membership was small, the work limited. The field was not even able to support itself but had to be aided. The Conference Minister visited this community, met the people, and proposed to subsidize their ministry on the following basis: If the community would pay its minister a salary of $1,800, give him his home, and accept his leadership, the Conference would contribute an additional $1,000: $200 for annuity, $500 for travel, and $300 for program expense. In return, the Conference asked the minister to meet and know the people in the surrounding region. Then, out of his pastoral experience of needs discovered, build here and there a program of service to the people of remote regions such as outpost Sunday schools, vacation church schools and other programs to meet these needs.

For this work, a man has been secured who loves the north country, its forests, fields, and streams, a man who speaks the language of these people. He is a man of appeal and leadership. Already he has resurrected the local church, raising the budget from $2,000 to $4,000. He has reorganized the work, enlarged the program, and made himself the leader of the community.

This ministry has been followed by the dedication of an able and devoted minister to another regional ministry.

Rural Evangelism

• *The Virginia Rural Methodist,* Norfolk, Va., published an article on "Rural Evangelism" in its June issue. R. P. Edwards, the author, said: "Evangelism is personal experience and must be wrought out in personal work. Pastors must leave their studies and go out into the roads and lanes of the country, into the homes of the people . . . Laymen must also go out to bring their brothers and friends to Him who is the Light of the World."

Christian Youth Conference

• Discussion of the Bible and its aid to living a Christian Life today had an important place on the program of the third Christian Youth Conference of North America, which convened at Grand Rapids, Mich., August 31-September 5.

5,000 Protestant young people from forty denominations met in 160 groups for an hour each day, with the young people themselves presiding and adults leading the Bible study discussion, said the Rev. Dennis Savage, conference director.

A 300-voice conference choir, led by Dr. Gerhard Schroth, sang anthems; and periods of hymn singing gave music its rightful place in the lives of these thousands of young people from all parts of the United States, Canada, and other American nations.

The conference was sponsored by the United Christian Youth Movement, which is administered through the International Council of Religious Education.

The Woman's Press

• *The Woman's Press,* organ of the National Board of the Y.W.C.A., 600 Lexington Avenue, New York 22, N. Y. contained in the May issue many articles on the general theme of "The People Who Grow Food."

Among them were the following contributions:

"The Jews in Agriculture," by Gabriel Davidson.

"Catholics and the Land," by William J. Gibbons, S.J.

"Rural Protestants and Land Tenure," by Benson Y. Landis.

Sir John Boyd Orr, of the F.A.O.; Ruth B. Sayre, of the Iowa Farm Bureau; James G. Patton of the Farmers' Union all write on international aspects of American agriculture.

Other articles, with authors, were:

"New Health for Rural America," Mildred Riese.

"Labor, Agriculture and the Community," Kermit Eby.

"Youth Pays a Subsidy to Agriculture," Florence Wykoff.

"Is Factory Farming Inevitable?" Lee Fryer.

"The Land," Elizabeth B. Herring.

Amsterdam and the Rural Churches

• The May issue of *The Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletin,* 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., featured an article by Ralph L. Williamson, director of the Rural Church Institute, Ithaca, N. Y., entitled, "Amsterdam and the Rural Churches." In this article Mr. Williamson explained the significance of the Amsterdam Conference and added: "Rural churches and individuals should seek a sense of oneness with rural people around the World . . . each rural church in this country should become affiliated with its local or county council of churches in order to enlarge its own area of active cooperation and unity."

Farm Cooperation in Western Canada

W. A. MacLEOD

• Bordering Minnesota, North Dakota and Montana, the three Canadian prairie provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta) extend from the thousand-mile barrier of rocks, water and forest separating western from eastern Canada to the Rocky Mountains, the eastern border of British Columbia. An extension of the Laurentian Plateau is the northern border of the arable area of the prairies, estimated at over 170,000,000 acres.

Canadian prairie farmers represent every European race. There are more of English, Scottish and French descent and not quite so many of German and Scandinavian origin as on the southern side of the boundary. In appearance, language and farming methods they are pretty much alike except that the Canadian growing season is not quite long enough for corn, soy-beans and the sorghums.

Wheat Pools

There is one feature of the Canadian prairie landscape that impresses the visitor. At nearly every railway station and siding there is a big grain elevator, occasionally two, bearing the name "Pool," a unit of the farmer cooperative grain companies. They stand like sentinels guarding the security of their farmer members.

There are 1160 in Saskatchewan, Canada's great wheat province. There are 469 in Alberta and 232 in Manitoba. The number has increased year by year. When the Wheat Pools were organized in 1923 and 1924 they did not own a solitary elevator, country or terminal, and today the prairie farmers own and operate the greatest grain handling system in the world.

Well over forty per cent of all the grain marketed in western Canada goes through the Pool elevators and terminals. The total capacity of Pool country elevators and annexes is more than a hundred million bushels. The capacity of Pool terminals when additions under construction are completed, will be over thirty one-million bushels. When the handlings of the United Grain Growers, a farmers' share cooperative, is included the total grain handling by farmer cooperators is well over fifty per cent.

The purchase of a three-and-a half-million-bushel grain terminal and twenty country elevators on February 2, 1948, by Manitoba Pool Elevators from the Reliance Grain Company, was a striking demonstration of the financial strength and forward-looking policy of the producer cooperative movement in western Canada. This recent purchase brings Manitoba Pool Elevator terminal capacity up to 5,850,000 bushels. The Reliance Grain Company is one of the oldest and most successful grain companies in Canada. It is significant that at the same time that the Manitoba Pool Elevators' deal was consummated, the Reliance Company sold most of its country elevators in Saskatchewan and Alberta to another farm cooperative, the United Grain Growers.

The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool the largest of the Pool organizations continues to expand its elevator facilities, and now operates 1160 country elevators with total capacity, including temporary and permanent annexes, of 68,509,300 bushels. Substantial additions to its two large terminals at the head of the Lakes are now under way.

The cooperative livestock marketing organization in Saskatchewan is now amalgamated with the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, which is officially Saskatchewan Cooperative Producers, although still known as the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. Saskatchewan Cooperative Producers have entered the vegetable oil field and the milling industry. The oil plant has made a good start on the construction of a 1,000-barrel flour mill.

rplus Earnings

Oddly enough, the prairie Wheat ols started as grain-marketing co-eratives rather than grain-han-ng enterprises. However, just in e they might need elevators later , a deduction of two cents per shel on all the grain delivered to Pools was collected as an elevator erve. As the three Pools were soon rketing more than half the wheat d a substantial percentage of rse grains the elevator reserves re applied to the purpose for ich they were intended.

In 1929, and the following years the great depression, when the rld panic dragged down grain ces in the general debacle, the irie farmers found they had uilded wiser than they knew" in oviding themselves with handling well as marketing machinery. ey assumed a debt of over twenty- million dollars which they be- to repay from the surplus earn-s of the Pool elevators. In two re years this debt will be paid, ncipal and interest, and the en- system will be clear of debt ex- t for a small balance on recent ensions.

t is regarded as a difficult feat to your cake and have it, but the ols have shown that nothing is possible. Besides their ownership the Pool elevators and terminals, ol members have been paid in h more than twenty-four million lars in patronage dividends. Pa-nage dividends would have been considerably higher if the Pool organizations had not succeeded in reducing handling charges and eliminating street spreads. As a result of Pool policy all grain producers, whether Pool members or patrons of line elevators, are enjoying more efficient and lower handling costs.

Membership

Pool membership is now approaching the two hundred thousand mark. Members are not bound by contract to deliver to their Pool elevator but the great majority are loyal to their organization and deliver to private companies only when their own elevator is plugged to the roof.

As the Canadian Wheat Pools are non-profit cooperative organizations they are deeply concerned in crop improvement, soil conservation, rural electrification and other measures to raise the standard of rural life on the prairies. Junior Cooperative Seed Growers have been organized in all three prairie provinces and have done more to stimulate interest in high quality cereal seed than would be possible by any other means. Grain research, weed control, improved tillage methods, have all been encouraged and assisted by the Pools as a public service to grain producers.

Pool officials have given yeoman service to national and international agricultural organizations. All Board members of the three Pools are elected annually and all must be owners and operators of farms so that there is no danger of their straying far from the grass roots.

Responsibility of the Rural Church

• In a recent issue of *The Moravian*, Bethlehem, Pa., Rudolph H. Schulze wrote about "The Challenge of the Rural Church," saying that the Christian church has the responsibility of providing the background for American civilization and that it "will soon crumble unless a healthy rural society and economy with a pronouncedly spiritual tone is encouraged."

How to Preserve Choice Children

Take one large grassy field.
One-half dozen children.
Two or three small dogs.
A pinch of brook and some pebbles.

Mix children and dogs well together and put them in the field, stirring constantly. Pour the brook over the pebbles; sprinkle the field with flowers, spread over all a deep blue sky and bake in the hot sun. When thoroughly brown, remove and set away to cool in a bath tub.

—Dan West

Correspondence

To the Editor:

I have been most interested in reading the numbers of *Town and Country Church* you sent me, and to learn the differences in our respective difficulties, and the fundamental similarities.

Our ancient parish system, which has so largely broken down in the towns, is now showing its inestimable value in the countryside, but your area has been too vast for a comparable system.

One great difference seems to be this: *we* are faced with the breakdown of our industrial system which for more than one hundred years has been supported by cheap food from exploited lands overseas.

You are more firmly based on agriculture which can supply all your needs, and also enables you to give most generous help to others. Now that there is no more cheap food to be had, when Marshall Aid ends, we must either starve or grow nearly all our own food (which we can do).

Since there is a world shortage of food, I am sure that this means that from the religious angle the Church and Land Movements of England must have a world-wide outlook and must work together.

—A. C. Crookshank
Ditchling, Hassocks, England

Announcement Regarding the 1948 Convocation on the Church in Town and Country

THE PLACE AND TIME: San Jose, California, November 9-11, 1948.

PROGRAM: A printed program is available on application to your Board of Home Missions or the Committee on Town and Country.

REGISTRATION FEE: A registration fee of $1.00 will be charged to help carry the expense of the Convocation. This is paid when you register at the Civic Auditorium, West San Carlos at Market Street, San Jose.

RESERVATION OF ROOMS IN HOMES: If you wish a room in a home, *please make application in advance,* mailing this to the Committee on Town and Country, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. The Committee cannot be responsible for any request received in its office later than October 29, 1948.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS: If you are going to a hotel, make your own reservations by writing directly to the hotels, which are listed in the printed program. In that event you need not write the Committee.

WHO MAY ATTEND: Everyone interested in the town and country church.

CORRESPONDENCE: Address inquiries to the Committee on Town and Country, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

On the Rural Roots of Churches

• An analysis made by our general secretary some years ago revealed that 1,800 of our congregations had 200 baptized members or less, including children and adults. Of this number, about 900 congregations had 100 baptized members. These figures give evidence that our Church has deep roots in the smaller congregations and parishes. It is self-evident that by far the greater percentage of these churches are rural. Many of them, organized in pioneer days, have continued their existence and service in the Kingdom upwards of fifty to seventy years.

While we do not neglect the call to the city fields, we must not forget the opportunity and open door we have in dealing with American rural life through our churches and the pastors serving them, especially in the Midwest. Other large denominations are definitely turning their attention to the rural areas. Some of them have neglected this field in favor of the cities. There is a realization today that the rural communities are the feeders, not only for our national life, economically and politically, but also for the church life of the nation.

It involves readjustments in the future organization of rural parishes. The country parishes should be given the attention and assistance they need to truly make use of their opportunity and fulfill their spiritual mission in the community.

In the very shadows of our rural churches are many unchurched groups that have not been drawn to the existing churches. We are in need of a vigorous and continued service to strengthen and expand our rural parishes. Many of the parishes should be encouraged, as the opportunity develops, to get the benefit of interns from our seminary. Many of these future pastors should have experience in and immediate contact with our great rural constituency.

Sympathetic and intelligent study and interest by all pastors and members in our entire Church should be made of the possibility of giving to rural America that contribution which our Church through faithful and consecrated work of pastors and members can give. We have a priority here, especially in the Middle West, where we have a large membership of pastors and members. It can truly be said: "I have set before thee an open door." By the grace of God and His help, let us eagerly and gladly enter that open door today.

—J. A. Aasgaard, President
The Evangelical Lutheran Church
in the *Lutheran Herald*

The Enlarged Town & Country Church

• We have doubled the size of Town and Country Church.

The Committee on Town and Country decided to take this step as a venture of faith. Receipts from subscriptions have thus far been sufficient to provide an eight-page but not a sixteen-page journal. The hope is that there will be many interested cooperators who will say so many good words about Town and Country Church that we will have enough subscribers, even at the present subscription rate, to carry the venture.

What You Can Do

There is no central promotion fund for Town and Country Church. It can only be promoted by the interested boards and agencies and by the ministers themselves. Will you, therefore, take responsibilty for:

1. Asking for circulars and sample copies;
2. Announcing the Journal at ministerial association meetings;
3. Seeing that Town and Country Church is announced at all rural church conferences;
4. Sending us material for publication.